

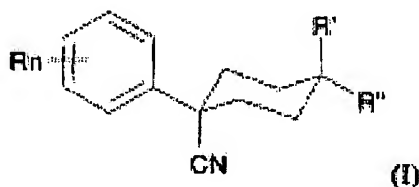
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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A process for preparing a compound of formula (I)



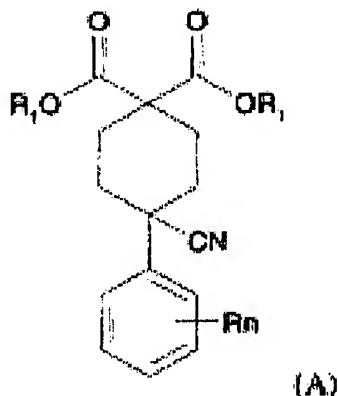
where

R is halo, C₁₋₆alkyl, C₁₋₆alkyl substituted with 1 to 4 halogens, C₁₋₆ alkoxy, C₁₋₆alkenyl, -O-(CH₂)_mcycloalkyl of 3-6 carbons;

n is 1-5;

~~M~~_m is 0 - 6; and

one of R' or R'' is hydrogen and the other is CO(O)X where X is hydrogen or C₁₋₆alkyl



which process comprises decarboxylating the diacid or diester of Formula (A)

where each R₁ is hydrogen or C₁₋₆alkyl-ester forming group of 1-6 carbon atoms and R and n are the same as for Formula (I) by treating the diacid or diester with about 1 equivalent of a base, about 3 equivalents of water and about 3 equivalents of an alkali salt in a suitable solvent and heated to between about 100 to 150°C for about 4-8 hours.

2. (Cancelled)

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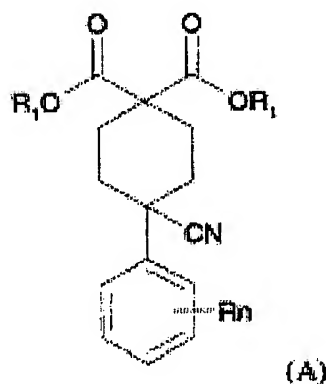
3. (Original) The process of claim 1 wherein R_1 is hydrogen, methyl or ethyl and the base is pyridine and the salt is lithium chloride.

4. (Currently amended) The process of claim 1 wherein n is in R_n is 2 and one group is substituted at the 3 position and the other group is substituted at the 4 position of the benzene ring of formula (I).

5. (Previously amended) The process of claim 1 wherein R_1 is methyl, one of R_n is methoxy, $-O-CF_3$, $-O-CHF_2$, or $-O-CH_2CHF_2$ and the other is C_{4-6} cycloalkyloxy.

6. (Currently amended) The process of claim 1 wherein n is in R_n is 2 and one is 3-cyclopentyloxy and a second R_n group is 4-methoxy.

7. (Original) A compound of formula (A)



wherein

R is halo, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkyl substituted with 1 to 4 halogens, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} alkenyl, $-O-(CH_2)_m$ cycloalkyl of 3-6 carbons;

n is 1-5;

m is 0-6;

R_1 is hydrogen or a C_{1-6} alkyl-ester forming group of 1-6 carbon atoms.

8. (Currently amended) A compound according to claim 7 wherein n is in R_n is 2 and R_n is methoxy, $-O-CF_3$, $-O-CHF_2$, or $-O-CH_2CHF_2$ and the other is C_{4-6} cycloalkyloxy.

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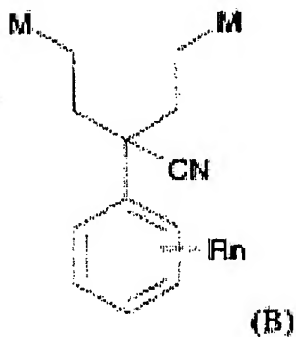
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9. (Currently amended) A compound according to claim 7 wherein n is in R_n is 2 and one is 3-cyclopentyloxy and a second R_n group is 4-methoxy.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently amended) A compound of formula (B) according to claim 10



wherein n in R_n is 2 and one R_n group is 3-cyclopentyloxy and the second R_n group is 4-methoxy and M is OH, an activated hydroxyl group, or halo.

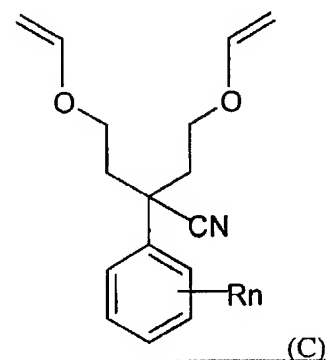
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13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

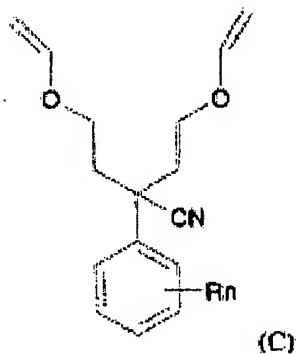
15. (Currently amended) A compound according to ~~claim 13~~ of formula C



wherein n is in R_n is 2 and one is 3-cyclopentyloxy and a second R_n group is 4-methoxy.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Original) A process for preparing a compound of Formula (I) according to claim 1, which process comprises



a. converting the vinyl ether of Formula (C)

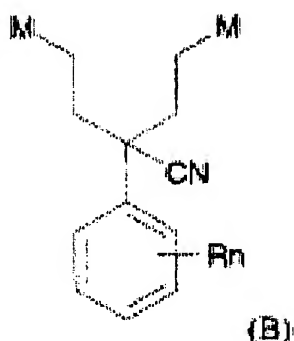
R is halo, C₁₋₆alkyl, C₁₋₆alkyl substituted with 1 to 4 halogens, C₁₋₆alkoxy, C₁₋₆alkenyl, -O-(CH₂)_mcycloalkyl of 3-6 carbons;

n is 1-5;

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m is 0 - 6;
to a compound of Formula (B)



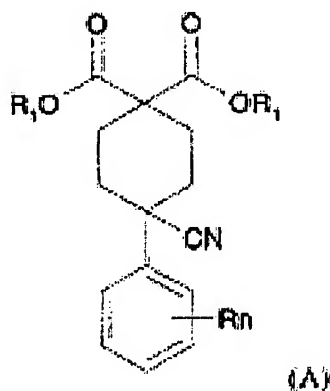
where M is OH,

b. converting the hydroxyl group of Formula (B) to a compound of Formula (B)

where M is a tosylate, mesylate or a triflate,

c. converting the tosylate, mesylate or triflate in Formula (B) to a compound of Formula (B) where M is halo,

d. treating the di-halo compound with dialkyl malonate to obtain a compound of Formula (A)



where R₁ is lower alkyl,

e. optionally saponifying the diester of Formula (A) to obtain a compound of Formula (A) where R₁ is hydrogen, and

f. decarboxylating a compound of Formula (A) where R₁ is hydrogen or C₁₋₆alkyl to obtain a compound for Formula (I) where one of R' is hydrogen and the other is CO(O)X where X is C₁₋₆alkyl or hydrogen.

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18. (Currently amended) The process of claim 17 wherein n is $\underline{2}$ and R_n is methoxy, $-O-CF_3$, $-O-CHF_2$, or $-O-CH_2CHF_2$ and the other is C_{4-6} cycloalkyloxy, M is tosylate and thereafter iodo, and R1 is methyl or ethyl.

19. (Currently amended) The process of claim 17 wherein n is $\underline{2}$ and one is 3-cyclopentyloxy and the second is 4-methoxy.